

Washington, D.C. (Tuesday, May 31, 2011) – Rep. Schakowsky issued the following statement on today's vote in the House of Representatives to increase the debt ceiling:

□ “Today the House Republicans brought up a bill that would raise the debt ceiling under a rule that would require a two-thirds majority for passage. The Republicans knew that this bill would never meet that requirement, but they called a vote anyway as part of their aggressive effort to hold the debt ceiling hostage and demand as ransom extreme cuts to Medicare, Medicaid, and other programs vital to the middle class and those who aspire to it. Their Medicare proposal would literally abolish Medicare and raise the cost of health care for seniors – a group whose median income is just \$19,000.

“In addition, their claims of fiscal responsibility are ridiculous – Republicans are the party responsible for a decade of fiscal recklessness – with two unpaid-for wars, two unpaid-for tax cuts for the wealthy, and a blind eye to Wall Street leading to a disastrous recession. I voted to raise the debt ceiling because I will not sacrifice Medicare so that Republicans can continue to give more tax breaks to the super rich, Big Oil, and companies that offshore jobs.

“Everyone agrees that we must address our long-term fiscal challenges. President Obama and Democrats have offered solutions that - unlike the Republicans - would not decimate the economic recovery, the well-being of seniors, working families, and poor children, and our ability to make investments in our country's future.

“I have introduced a plan that shows how we can achieve fiscal responsibility in a way that protects the middle class. My plan would create jobs so that we can put people back to work, raise revenues from millionaires and billionaires, eliminate wasteful Pentagon spending, bring down health care spending throughout the economy, and make other targeted cuts to programs and tax subsidies for wealthy corporations.

“Republicans want to do the opposite. They want to cut taxes for the wealthiest Americans, Big Oil and corporations that ship American jobs overseas, at the expense of Medicare and other programs that help the elderly, the disabled, and children. They are using every trick they have, including holding the debt ceiling hostage, in order to move their agenda forward.”

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